

FACTS ABOUT

Certification for Engine Packages for use in Specially Constructed Vehicles (including Kit Cars)

Additional engine options for vehicle builders

What is ARB proposing?

ARB staff is proposing to create an optional process for certifying new clean engines intended for use in specially constructed vehicles, including kit cars. Car builders choosing to use these certified engines would not be subject to the 500 vehicles per year limit associated with Senate Bill 100 (SB 100). These new cars with certified engines installed as prescribed by the engine manufacturer would be subject to California vehicle registration like other newly produced cars.

What is a specially constructed vehicle?

A specially constructed vehicle, often called a “kit car” or “replica,” is a car built from a kit, new parts, used parts, or some combination of all of these. Specially constructed vehicles can include replicas of actual cars manufactured in the past, such as the Shelby Cobra®, as well as more unique creations that do not resemble any particular make of car. Specially constructed vehicles cannot be built for resale.

Specially constructed vehicles do not include restorations of actual vintage vehicles, for example, old vehicles rebuilt to their former specifications.

How are hobbyists currently registering their kit cars in California?

SB 100, established in 2000, allows up to 500 specially constructed vehicles to be newly registered each year, using any engine. The California Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV), Bureau of Auto Repair (BAR) and California Highway Patrol (CHP) currently have a process to assign specially constructed vehicles a vehicle identification number (VIN) and model year so they may be legally registered. The DMV tracks the SB 100 Certificate of Sequence numbers each year.

Would ARB’s proposed certification process change my ability to register my kit car via the SB 100 process?

NO, not at all. This process would provide a path for engine manufacturers to certify new engines with emission controls that would allow an unlimited number of specially constructed vehicles to be registered in addition to the 500 provided annually by SB 100.

How would ARB’s proposal affect current registration practices for hot rods?

ARB’s proposal would not affect currently registered or future hot rods, since hot rods are typically pre-1955 existing vehicles that were never subject to emission controls.

Why is ARB proposing this certification process?

Specially constructed vehicles registered under SB 100 are often fitted with uncontrolled crate engines that can have 60 to 200 times the emissions of a modern, clean engine. At this time, once the SB 100 annual vehicle limit is reached, individuals registering additional specially constructed vehicles are required to use a new engine with all current model year emission controls or wait until the next calendar for a SB 100 registration. The proposed new process would allow ARB to certify clean engines that are specifically designed to be used in specially constructed vehicles, providing a more practical option for individual car builders and hobbyists once the annual 500 vehicle SB 100 limit is reached.

What would be included in a certified engine package?

To ensure this certified engine package remains as clean as possible, the package will be required to come with an engine and controller, including software and calibration. Additionally, the package will be required to come with exhaust and evaporative emission components such as intake and exhaust manifolds, catalytic converter, an evaporative canister and detailed instructions for the proper installation of the package.

Why can't ARB make it easier for hobbyists to register their kit cars, for example, by raising the 500 per year limit set by SB 100?

The 500 per year limit set by SB 100 is set by statute, and any change would require a vote of the legislature. ARB cannot raise or lower the number of vehicles provided by SB 100. This proposal is intended to give an additional option for kit car builders and hobbyists to use clean engines in their specially constructed vehicle.

For more information

Contact the ARB's Helpline at (800) 242-4450.

To obtain this document in an alternative format or language please contact the ARB's Helpline at (800) 242-4450 or at helpline@arb.ca.gov. TTY/TDD/ Speech to Speech users may dial 711 for the California Relay Service.